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RELIVING *Festive Memories*



My love for decorating was significantly influenced by the Christmas season. The holidays were a very big deal in our household, and I used to take it upon myself to be the chief of design when it came to styling our home. I distinctly remember my excitement every time we had to bring out the boxes of Christmas ornaments. I even used to spend what little money I had then to purchase additional décor, so I'd be able to achieve the look that I want to create.

But my obsession did not end within the four corners of our home as soon enough, I started involving our neighbors in my Christmas Project. I had this idea of transforming our street to make it the most brightly decorated in the village, complete with *parols* and arcs that would run across houses facing each other. Just imagine me as a little boy persuading our neighbors to take part in my street-wide decorating extravaganza!

To cut the story short, I was able to convince them, and my outrageous idea became a yearly tradition that lasted a few Christmas seasons. While my priorities as an adult have drastically changed since then, I am still very fond of the holiday festivities, and enjoy catching up with friends and family over the endless gatherings in December.

The season is upon us, and we've put together an issue filled with an abundance of inspiration from shopping, decorating, and entertaining. We've got you covered with a holiday gift guide in our Best Buys section, fabulous gift wrapping ideas in our Design Solutions section, and inspirations on how to adorn your Christmas trees in our Decorate section.

We are also thrilled to feature four outstanding abodes in our Homes section this month, including a residence that feels like an urban oasis in the heart of the city. Also inside is a contemporary house designed by Architect Ed Calma, with interior design inputs by its gracious homeowner, who toured us around their family home. Look no further for an unforgettable staycation with your loved ones through Rockwell Land's latest foray into hotel and leisure. Aruga by Rockwell has remarkably designed and furnished apartments located inside Rockwell Center in Makati to ensure a relaxing getaway within city. These and more inside our specially curated Shopping issue this month.

Wishing you all a warm holiday season. Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year! 🏠


Nix Alañon
Editor-in-Chief

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*Produced by Geraldine Verga
Photographed by Yukie Sarto of Studio 100
and Vincent Coscolluela*

Intellectual, reflective, and tranquil. Understated furniture pieces are the way to go, but incorporate bronze or brass accents to provide a beautiful contrast and create arresting rooms. Spruce up timeworn pieces with either modern prints or rich finishes like velvet. Blue can be melancholic but with the right tone and interesting details, it makes for an impressive selection. 🏠



Table lamp, price available upon request at The Pietro Collection



Blue Agate bookends, P7,250, available at Blue Carreon Home



Oval side table, price available upon request at The Pietro Collection



Vintage *Ponti*-inspired armchair, P45,000, available at OZ Gallery



Double diamond vase, P6,500, available at KISH



Pointed hexagon bowl, P2,900, available at KISH



Circuit-206 Navy, price available upon request at Weaves of Asia



Blue *Bingo* pouf, P9,000, available at KISH



Peacock 4 cabinet, P110,000, available at KISH



Chester compact sofa in navy, P89,500, available at Habitat Manila



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Sheer Brilliance

See how white is the ultimate choice for the cultured and the urbane

Produced by Geraldine Verga

Photographed by Yukie Sarto of Studio 100 and Vincent Coscolluela

Clean, pristine, and elegant. Lift the look of your room and create a refreshing space with whites, beiges, and silver. White combined with metallics can be a little too striking, so try to layer with textures. You may also add a hint of eccentricity using different finishes such as *capiz*, *faux* snakeskin leather, or acrylic. Combine classic pieces with foibles inspired by nature. 🏠

Pumpkin chandelier in silver leaf, P46,500, available at OZ Gallery



Pentagon light, P3,000, available at DesignMatters



Ring on nickel, price available upon request at The Pietro Collection



Aluminum date palm bowl, P3,000, available at KISH



Folding tray table, price available upon request at The Pietro Collection



Heathrow wall clock, P25,000, available at KISH



Mason wingback chair, P36,597.50, available at Philux



Mirror accent table, price available upon request at The Pietro Collection



Mario Luca white-footed coupe (set of 4), P6,600, available at Blue Carreon Home



Resin wing table d cor, price available upon request at The Pietro Collection



Marquis stool, P9,100, available at Philux

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Luscious Exhilaration

Conjure opulence and grandeur with a balmy botanical color

Produced by Geraldine Verga

Photographed by Yukie Sarto of Studio 100 and Vincent Coscolluela

Refreshing, natural, and lavish. Rooms with verdant vibe are imaginative and stimulating. Think sophistication and glamour to show off a stunning blend of emerald and amber hues. Shagreen is slowly becoming in vogue along with intriguing insect-themed décor, while lattice details provide an interesting take reminiscent of exotic oriental features. 🏠



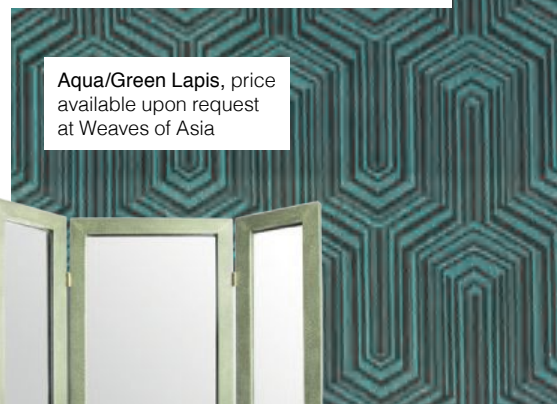
Throw pillows, P950 each, available at Philux



Gray round boxes (set of 3), price available upon request at The Pietro Collection



Green mirrored tray, price available upon request at The Pietro Collection



Aqua/Green Lapis, price available upon request at Weaves of Asia



Teal Chinoise chair, P16,500, available at OZ Gallery



Brass and stone tic-tac-toe, P33,900, available at Blue Carreon Home



Spiral sculpture, P13,900, available at Blue Carreon Home



Dore salt and pepper shakers, P1,600, available at Blue Carreon Home



Vanity mirror, P18,800, available at Blue Carreon Home



Majorca X-tray table, P20,000, available at Blue Carreon Home

Accent footstool, P6,995, available at Philux



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Brass butterfly, available at Blue Carreon Home

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Life of the Party

Serve your guests in style with these unique finds

Written by Daniella Rodriguez | Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100
Art directed by Camille del Rosario | Assisted by Andrea Arines and Cy Yambao

While good music, great food, and even better company all contribute to a great get-together, remember not to skip on presentation. Give your guests a proper start to the meal by setting the table well. It shows that there was a little extra time and effort put into welcoming them into your home. These stylish finds will surely get the conversation rolling. **mh**



1. Carafe, P1,980 | 2. Vienna water tumbler (set of 6), P1,595 | 3. Vienna red wine glass (set of 6), P1,795 | 4. Anfora glass pitcher, P1,195 | 5. Michelangelo white wine glass (set of 6), P1,995, available at Habitat Manila | 6. Gold lacquer wood tray, P1,950, available at West Elm | 7. Round wooden capiz bowl, P499.75, available at Kultura | 8. Gold flatware five-piece setting, P2,250, available at West Elm | 9. Thierry Marx black mortar and pestle, P2,890, available at Habitat Manila | 10. Large home cutting board, P2,450, available at Pottery Barn | 11. Seletti Hybrid-Zora teacup with saucer, P2,640, available at Studio Dimensione | 12. Pamasse sugar pot with teaspoon, P980, available at Habitat Manila | 13. Seletti Hybrid-Tamara coffee cup with saucer, P1,020, available at Studio Dimensione | 14. Pamasse teapot, P2,980, available at Habitat Manila | 15. Gallery dinner plate, P679; salad plate, P529; and bowl, P529, available at Crate and Barrel | 16. Wood beaded coaster set, P1,250, available at West Elm | 17. Marin green dinner plate, P409; salad plate, P319; and bowl, P319, available at Crate and Barrel | 18. Zigzag mat in rose bisque, P1,650, available at West Elm | 19. Thierry Marx oil drizzler, P680, available at Habitat Manila | 20. Capiz tray, P999.75, available at Kultura | 21. Del Mar margarita glass, P559, available at Crate and Barrel | All gift boxes and paper bag available at Wrap Shop



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Two Scents Worth

Home fragrances that keep the holiday spirit in the air

Written by Daniella Rodriguez | Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100
Art directed by Camille del Rosario | Assisted by Andrea Arines and Cy Yambao

Fragrances can alter the mood of certain spaces just as much as using special lighting or buying new furniture. So instead of splurging on big things, or many little things just to keep with the season, you can try using different scents to change the vibe of your room, depending on your mood or the occasion. Scented candles, room spray, oils, and incense can all do the trick. 



1. Pine and eucalyptus home candle, P3,570, available at Jo Malone London
2. Lime basil and mandarin home candle, P3,570, available at Jo Malone London
3. Pure Imperial *Autonne Kyoto* scent with diffuser, P3,250, available at Habitat Manila
4. ATIN *Boracay* reed diffuser, P699.75, available at Kultura
5. *Lino nel Vento* Scent Surround linen spray, P3,400, available at Jo Malone London
6. *Acqua de Limone* Scent Surround linen spray, P3,400, available at Jo Malone London
7. Red Roses Scent Surround room spray, P3,570, available at Jo Malone London
8. ATIN *paru-paro* scented candle, P349.75, available at Kultura
9. ATIN *tutubi* scented candle, P349.75, available at Kultura
10. Pure Imperial *Autonne Kyoto* scented candles, from P2,890 to P5,890, available at Habitat Manila

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Not Just for Show

When choosing accessories, both flair and function matter

Written by Daniella Rodriguez | Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100
Art directed by Camille del Rosario | Assisted by Andrea Arines and Cy Yambao

Accessories may not be the focal point of a room, but they definitely add character to the space. Choose stylish, classic pieces that serve a purpose, so that they're not left for display only. Photo frames are always fail-safe, while trinket boxes and glass cases may take more creativity but can be used in interesting ways. They're also great gift ideas for friends and family—everyone can use and style them how they please. 🏠



1. Striped mercury Hurricane vase (medium), P2,250 | 2. Display box terrarium, P2,450 | 3. Dotted porcelain Hurricane vase (medium), P1,750 | 4. Dotted porcelain Hurricane vase (small), P995, available at West Elm | 5. Mercury glass box, P1,295, available at Studio Dimensione | 6. Elle tea light candle holder in gold, P1,395, available at Habitat Manila | 7. Black-and-white capiz tray, P399.75, available at Kultura | 8. Embrun blown glass and copper vase, P1,295, available at Habitat Manila | 9. Mercury glass box, P1,895 | 10. House Doctor green mega bottle, P2,498, available at Studio Dimensione | 11. Picture frame, P699.75, available at Kultura | 12. Marble Teardrop candle holder, P299 each, available at Crate and Barrel | 13. Sarah Campbell mosaic jewelry box, P2,650 | 14. Sculpture spheres, P1,650 (gold) and P2,250 (silver), available at West Elm | All gift boxes available at Wrap Shop

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Tech-Savvy

Best holiday buys for a innovative home

Written by Daniella Rodriguez

Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100

Art directed by Camille del Rosario

Assisted by Andrea Arines and Cy Yambao

Technology is meant to make our lives easier, and incorporating the best and trendiest gadgets in the home will do just that. Not everyone can live in a smart home just yet, but we can start out by investing in everyday items instead. From the latest kitchen must-haves for the culinary enthusiast to the hippest music gadgets, find something for the whole family to use and enjoy. 🏠



1. Infiny Press Revolution slow juicer, P15,980 | 2. La Moulinette Force chopper, P4,350 | 3. Masterchef gourmet mixer, P18,000 available at Moulinex
4. Gold MUO wireless speaker, P14,000 | 5. White KEF EGG wireless digital music system, P22,000, available at Coby's Design Center | 7. My Cloud Mirror personalcloud storage (4TB), P15,990, available at WD | 7. My Passport for Mac (2TB), P6,490, available at WD | 8. KEF M400 hi-fi headphones in sunset orange, P10,000, available at Coby's Design Center | All gift boxes available at Wrap Shop

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Neutral Noise

Style your space with these versatile pieces

Written by Daniella Rodriguez | Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100
Art directed by Camille del Rosario | Assisted by Andrea Arines and Cy Yambao

There is no need for bold colors when toned down hues can do the trick. Neutrals suit any style, so whether you're buying these for a friend or treating yourself for the holidays, it's hard to miss a beat with these home and bath essentials. Though subtle in color, they still add a lot of visual interest, offering an array of materials, textures, and patterns that are good enough to use year-round.



1. *Bonnie* beaded lumbar pillow, P2,950, available at Pottery Barn | 2. *Theo* pillow cover, P1,609, available at Crate and Barrel | 3. Zigzag bathmat in slate, P1,750, available at West Elm | 4. *Costello* throw, P1,109, available at Crate and Barrel | 5. Brass coral jewelry holder, P3,950, available at West Elm | 6. Marble bathroom set, P1,799.75, available at Kultura | 7. Rayon chenille throw, P3,950, available at Pottery Barn | 8. Picture frame, P315, available at Kultura | 9. Foam soap dispenser, P895 | 10. Foam cotton jar, P595, available at Habitat Manila | All gift boxes and paper bag available at Wrap Shop

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LET'S SHOP

Reward Yourself

A well-deserved home upgrade from
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Photographed by Floyd Jhocson of Studio 100, Reau Gutierrez, and Greg Mayo

The most wonderful time of the year has come again, and this season of giving has kept our minds preoccupied with a list of gifts to buy for loved ones. While it is in the Filipino culture to always put others before ourselves, it wouldn't hurt to come up with our own Christmas wishlist that consists of long-awaited purchases for the household. Reward yourself at MC Home Depot, a one-stop shop that provides your family with every significant piece, which can add interesting details to your beloved home without burning a hole in your pocket. 🏠



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ELBA gas range (6E DX 348), P80,400, available at ELBA



Drop light/hanging lamp, P4,693, available at Brightsmart Lighting, Inc.



Dining chair two tone wood (mahogany), P8,500, available at Tabrete Furniture



Madera engineered wood, price available upon request at ARK Lifestyle Concepts Corp. and Madera Lifestyle Concepts Inc.



Madera solid wood (narra), price available upon request at ARK Lifestyle Concepts Corp. and Madera Lifestyle Concepts Inc.



Stainless corner caddy (CC1), P985, available at Durable



Chigo portable aircon 1HP (Model #CP-25C2), P18,000, available at DM Harder Trading



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Solar Cool/Eco-Green roller shades, P250/sq.ft., available at ABC Décor Centre



Folding door (French/wengue), P300/sq.ft., available at ABC Décor Centre



Indoor wall lamp (Code #L025L), P1,780, available at Illumitech and Edix Multi-Concept



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New, Now, Next

Find out what the latest news and products are

Bathing in Luxury

While bathrooms generally serve as a haven where you can relax and spend a few hours alone, bathtubs are often said to provide a more comfortable and self-indulgent retreat. Kohler, a leading brand that promotes function and style in the bathroom, gives you all the right reasons to purchase a tub with its newest collection of Lithocast baths. Featuring Lithocast solid surface material, which has matte stone-like finish, the three models of bathtubs—Abrazo, Aliento, and The Askew—were created in different shapes to also suit varying design styles. For more information, visit kohler.ph.



Hot Off the Grill

Have you ever dreamt of holding your very own grill party, but don't have enough means to pull off one? Throw your worries out the door, as Bull outdoor products have recently arrived in Philippine shores through one-stop shop Wilcon Depot. Boasting of durability, design, and innovation, Bull's quality grilling merchandise are made from high-grade stainless steel that prevents the products from rusting and discoloration. Put your cooking skills to the test and experience the ultimate grilling experience by dropping by Wilcon Depot branches or visiting wilcon.com.ph.

Health is Wealth

They say the only place we feel safest is inside the comforts of home. More than designing it according to your preferred aesthetic, you must build a house that prioritizes the well-being of each family member. Sharp Philippines supports this endeavour as it introduces the Plasmacluster Ion Technology, an air purifying solution engineered to ensure clean air around the home. With the newly released air purifier, you can easily deactivate up to 99 percent of airborne allergens, viruses, and bacteria while eliminating unwanted odors. The mite catcher, on the other hand, removes microscopic insects from fabric surfaces and allows you to sleep peacefully on a dust-mite free mattress. The Sharp Plasmacluster Air Purifier UV+ and Mite Catcher are available at Anson's, Abenson, and SM Appliance Centers in the Greater Manila Area. For more inquiries, visit sharp.ph.





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Space Savers

For 25 years now, Danish brand Innovation has shown how understanding that form and function always come together led the company to produce durable designs for everyday use. While its array of products includes tables, cushions, and beanbags, Innovation is best known for its multifunctional sofa beds, especially manufactured for small spaces. Such sofa beds, which come in varying styles and forms to suit every homeowner's needs, are the perfect companions for sleeping, sitting, or simply relaxing. Designed to last a lifetime, Innovation's quality sofa beds allow you to choose your preferred mattress, cover, textile, and cushions. Visit Innovation at DesignPod, 4/F SM Megamall Building A, EDSA corner Julia Vargas Avenue, Mandaluyong City. For more information, visit livingspace.com.ph.





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Test of Creativity

Designing a space can be quite challenging, especially when you don't know where and how to begin. Fortunately, Wilcon Depot has been around since 2003, providing homeowners with every material they need in building a house—from constructing materials to bathroom fixtures to furniture pieces to kitchenware and dinnerware. To coincide with Wilcon Depot's launch of grilling merchandise from Bull, SoFA Design Institute, particularly the Commercial Interior Styling class of IDr. Joy Merryll Ngo, has collaborated with the one-stop shop to curate three vignettes that exemplify Wilcon Depot's versatility.

VICTORIAN GODDESS by Jeziel Banaban, Gil Garcia, and Jerson Paz

"Because the wallpaper has vintage floral prints, we decided to create a Victorian-themed living room in a monochromatic color palette. We carefully chose the appropriate furniture pieces, color schemes, patterns, and textures that would complement the space's initial style. The end result makes a statement in its own right—subtle, light, and clean. We added floral accents to achieve a more feminine look, and injected metallic elements to suggest class and sophistication."

MAXIMALIST HAVEN by Pj Almera, Peng Dumalaog, and Aimee Gandia

"The first challenge that our team had to face was to incorporate the existing wallpaper with our preferred style that best fits it. We decided to combine the ideas of each member, thus we came up with a maximalist living area that reflected our individual characters. Our space is designed for a young and creative urban chic artist, with the bold yet cohesive blend of colors, prints, and patterns expressing a distinct maximalist style. The eclectic mix of the furniture pieces and accessories created visually appealing layers that make the room seem playful and unique. Meanwhile, flowers and indoor plants give the space a softer feel, while the inclusion of other personal items made the living room look more liveable and innately stylish."



REVIVING RETRO by Mabeth Arreola, Ross Canseco, Happy Fernandez, and Aliya Parcs

"Being presented with a black-and-white wall that had a retro feel, our team was immediately drawn to the idea of giving the living area a modern twist. We intended to create movement in space and time, which is similarly expressed in the wallpaper print. An attention-grabbing couch in turquoise takes the spotlight, as it is positioned in front of large mirrors that mimic the place where the past and present meet. The flowing forms of the accents make their own statement against the pillows, which carry their identity through colors and textures, but at the same time maintain a sense of unity. The overall design nurtures an interesting and respectful dynamics of different layers and dimensions."

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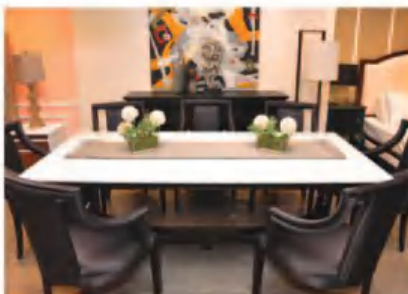
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Royal Treatment

Sleep plays a vital role in every person's well-being, so it is important to get enough hours of sleep no matter how hectic the past day has been. To help you maximize your available hours left for sleeping, Dexterton has recently launched the Dexterton Mattress Gallery that showcases high-end bed frames, mattresses, and bedding accessories. One of the two featured brands, Viking beds of Sweden guarantee ultimate comfort for having used the finest materials, newest technology, and modern design. You may customize the softness or firmness on each side of the bed, and likewise choose among a variety of mattress toppers. Simmons, on the other hand, is one of the oldest manufacturers in the United States, whose top-of-the-line products can be found in the most prestigious hotels across the globe. If you're longing to know how your family can sleep like royalty, pay a visit to the Dexterton Mattress Gallery located at 3/F Phase 2, Greenbelt 5, Ayala Center, Makati.

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METRO
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Beauty in Blossoms

Top floral boutiques that can let you celebrate beautiful moments

Written by Bettina Z. Bernabe | Photos courtesy of Designer Blooms, Petalier, and Te Amo Floristeria



Designer Blooms

Being in the flower business for 23 years now, Designer Blooms has never cut too short in offering some of the finest flowers for every occasion. Better known for their distinct and innovative designs, as well as their personalized, quality service, Designer Blooms offers both on-the-spot and home service arrangements that aim to bring the beauty of freshly cut, natural, dried, and artificial plants right when and where you need them.

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Website: designerblooms.com
Facebook: facebook.com/DesignerBlooms

Flowers symbolize many different things, but one thing is for sure—they represent beauty. Seeing, giving, and receiving flowers make for more memorable moments, and each one is always worth every blossoming bloom. These three luxury floral boutiques are made to give you pleasant memories with their signature arrangements for every occasion, especially now that it is the season of giving and spreading some love. 🌸

Te Amo Floristeria

Greatly inspired by blooms from some of the world's best horticultural countries, Amy Peng and Cybill Juarez of Te Amo Floristeria are able to express and share beauty in every blossom through their signature dramatic floral displays and preserved flower arrangements. As florists who believe in the best use of bold colors, textures, and techniques, Te Amo Floristeria is well-known for the premium preserved blooms they offer that truly embody timeless beauty.

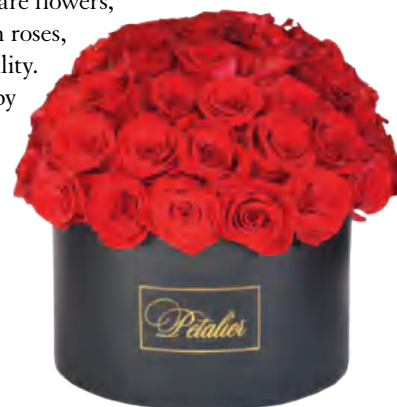
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Petalier

As the owner of this online-based flower shop for luxury blooms, Diane Yap believes that beauty can be found in the simplest of things. One of which are flowers, most especially Ecuadorian and English roses, peonies, and hydrangeas of the best quality. Boxing beauty has been made possible by Petalier, who offers perfectly arranged blooms boxed in various sizes: the Petite, the Hat, and the Grand, all for the most inspiring effect.

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Wrap Stars

Personality-based gift wrapping ideas for each and every friend on your list

*Written and styled by Kara Gonzales
Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100*

‘T is the season once again and, with the holidays fast approaching, all of us are faced with the one task that most people dread: gift wrapping! In this day and age, where everything is done quick and easy, gift wrapping has been taken for granted. Nowadays, paper bags that come with greeting cards are everyone’s go-to solution for wrapping presents for loved ones. In this season of giving, it is good to note that taking a little time and patience to wrap your gifts according to a friend’s personality can go a long way in showing him how much you truly care. Here are some ideas on how to personalize your gift wrappers this Christmas. 🎁

NO FRILLS

Keeping it simple doesn’t mean resorting to a paper bag with a note. Show a little more love by wrapping your present in black paper, and then doodling on it using a white pen. If you’re aiming for versatile wrappers, go for darker colors with simple patterns like stripes or chevron to make your gift look more dynamic. Christmas doesn’t have to be only red, green, and yellow—let your creative juices flow, and come up with your very own wrapper design.



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Small spaces need compromise. There is certainly no room for various bulky furniture. Each piece must adhere to the standards of style, comfort and functionality in order to have a designated place at home. This poses a challenge when you go furniture shopping. Good thing Innovation™ makes a difference in every space with multifunctional sofa beds made at any preference. Be detail-oriented in selecting the bed, mattress, textile, cushions and other considerations so you can make the most of it. You can rest assured that this ideal sofa bed is hand made with great care and attention. 🏠



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(UN)CONVENTIONAL

To achieve a classic appeal, keep your gift wrappers in theme with traditional Christmas colors such as red, green, and yellow (or at times, gold). Add touches of shimmer by using either glossy wrapping paper or fancy ribbons. You may experiment with layering ribbons to instantly create a richer, fuller look.



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Of Trees and Traditions

Five personalities share the significance of putting up a tree this holiday season

Written by Geraldine Verga and Cy Yambao

Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100, Vincent Coscolleula, and Greg Mayo

Nostalgic But Playful

Interior designer Nardy Aquino has taken on a different path with the design of this tree by his garden. Peppered with nostalgic characters like Santa Claus, The Snowman, reindeers, and toy soldiers, it is reminiscent of happy Christmas memories of almost every child and child-at-heart. “We usually take on a theme that would go for all the trees in the house,” relates Nardy. “But this year, we decided to dress them up as we want.” In lieu of gifts under the tree, he placed what he fondly calls “automatons,” which are battery-operated dancing and singing toys. Moreover, Nardy opted for fiber optics to add a subtle sparkle to his hand-painted vintage treasures.



Beguiling Wonder

Straight from a design connoisseur's mind, this slim bejeweled tree is a contrast of elements with its large amber and amethyst "gemstones" flecked with glittery snowflakes. "I try to mix and match, and change my theme," shares interior designer Nardy

Aquino. Every year is a courageous experiment, as he brings out his décor and thinks of new ways to dress his entire home for the holidays. "We even put on some Christmas music while decorating, just so we would already feel the vibe," he adds.

Even his office staff is very much involved in decorating, resulting to a fun activity of sorts. This year is evidently all about bold colors that make Nardy's home even more alive and welcoming—a perfect setting for intimate and large gatherings alike.





Home for the Holidays

For esteemed interior designer Nardy Aquino, a well-designed home is not merely defined by carefully chosen furniture pieces and finishes. Being a collector of sorts has developed his fascination for local products, which Nardy buys off-season to get them for a fraction of the cost. “Your house is your laboratory,” he smilingly quips. Indeed, Nardy’s house is a testament to a space that is often redecorated per occasion using his meticulously catalogued décor and artworks, which he all religiously rotates. This picturesque setting goes with the traditional Christmas colors of red and green with gold accents. The bold red walls are balanced by plush green furniture and plaid fabrics with a metallic sheen. Interestingly, Nardy also added a mini tree accentuated with a local interpretation of The Nativity made of *buri* and mother of pearl. What better way to showcase local talent than to display them in your own home?

Picture Perfect

Elegant, classic, and festive—this is exactly how musical theater actor Franco Laurel and his wife, Ayen, describe their Christmas tree decked in traditional colors of red, green, and gold. “The inspiration for this year’s design, as with the past years, is Christmas in full bloom,” shares Franco, revealing that he leaves all decisions to his wife, who works closely with Designer Blooms. While the tree basically follows the same look, Ayen makes it a point to add a few more ornaments each year—some of which having a whimsical touch but still blending well with the decorations collected over time. “We start Christmas early at home,” says Franco, “as we normally put up our tree right before our daughter Angia’s birthday in October and take it down after our son Hasan’s birthday in January. It is customary for us to have our family picture in front of the tree, so it has become an integral part of our family tradition.”



Tales of a Jetsetter

“Our yearly tradition is that whenever we spend our holidays somewhere, we make sure to bring an ornament back from the family trip,” shares Stephanie Kienle-Gonzalez of luxury furniture brand Philux. She points to a hand-carved wooden ornament they came across while up in the mountains of Chamonix, France and another significant ornament from the Jackson Hole valley in Wyoming. But the most special ornament would have to be the hand-blown Baby’s Christmas tree from Germany, a gift from the godfather of Stephanie’s daughter, Andrea, which symbolizes her first collection of holiday ornaments. “Having a baby has made Christmas very important to us, so we wanted to make an annual tradition,” says Stephanie. “For the first couple of Christmases, we preferred our tree to be simple and traditional. It’s not really about the theme—it’s more about the story behind the ornaments and of each year building it together.”



Candyland

“Putting up the Christmas tree and decorating it is special for my husband, Tom, and I,” shares stylist and multi-awarded lifestyle blogger Jenni Epperson. “We are passing on the same tradition we grew up with to our children.” For the past three years, she has used the same white tree but personalizes it with ornaments that represent each member of the family. Jenni has retained the same theme as in 2014, during which she dedicated the peppermint ornaments to their daughter Aryanna, who goes by the moniker ‘Pepper’ or ‘Peppermint.’ Whimsical red-and-white décor such as lollipops, candy canes, cupcakes, ribbons, and even small lanterns express the Eppersons’ fun side and love for one another. “Even though our tree is dressed in holiday finery,” says Jenni, “what’s truly important to us is enjoying each other’s company, and using the season as an excuse to eat lots of cookies and drink milk.”



White Christmas

"I basically started with a simple tree, and then every year I try to add new ornaments," says Cy Yñares, also known as the Bald Baker. Christmas happens to be his favorite holiday, which is why he has started a tradition of putting up a tree once the ber months roll in. From having only silver leaves, authentic-looking twigs, and an abundance of birds, Cy's Christmas tree design has come a long way with the addition of owl ornaments, origami pigs hand-carried from the US, and chatterboxes that inject color and fun. "I think my tree looks happy despite being monochromatic," shares Cy. "There's life to it because of the animals and since I like nature, my initial intent was to bring a tree that was less festive and more natural."



Neutral colors are soft and subtle on the eyes. Taupe, beige, and grays with accents of goldenrod yellow and powder blue remind you of summery sunsets and cerulean skies. Big windows usher in generous natural light, but not without window treatments to ward off the heat. Instead of a coved ceiling, the owners and their interior designer opted for a wooden panel that spans a small portion of the ceiling and extends down to one side of the wall. This breaks an otherwise monotonous travertine wall.



A RESTED DEVELOPMENT

A home in the suburbs is transformed into a private oasis

*Written by Geraldine Verga | Photographed by Vincent Coscolluela
Art directed by Camille del Rosario*



The façade boasting of clean, structured lines is surprisingly ungated, which makes this house all the more inviting.

It is all a matter of knowing what you want and getting the right designer to carry out the plans for your dream home. For this laidback couple, only one design direction was in order: to build a contemporary resort-like dwelling that would be an inviting relief from the heat, traffic, and other city woes. For interior designer Erika Narciso, on the other hand, to design a beach house or at least something along the lines of it is a dream come true.

Right in the outskirts of a bustling city is a home that can give resorts a run for their money. This 225-square meter beauty is every inch a restful sanctuary starting from the grand foyer bathed in natural light, which is rich in textures due to natural elements. The travertine spanning one wall is an unassuming beauty that emphasizes the grandeur of a spacious foyer, while the *narra* borders exquisitely frame a subtle take on patterns offered by the black-and-white Machuca tiles. Completing the look is an atypical *capiz* chandelier that mimics sea mist lifting up from the shores.

Given that the couple has young kids and they themselves are young-at-heart, an expansive space to move around is a big factor. “We find ourselves entertaining guests often,” the homeowner relates. Keeping an open plan makes it easy for them to move around, most especially when the merriments start from the living area, then the dining and kitchen, which has a perfect view of the pool in all its azure glory.





Eating meals has never been more enjoyable, as the family's dining area has a beautiful view of the pool and fountain. Investing in quality furniture pieces is a must not only for ostentatious purposes, but mainly because these are the most utilized aspects in any home.

HOMES

“When we come home, we want to feel as if we’re on a weekend getaway,” the couple shares. They have always been fascinated with the resort feel and given the current transportation conditions, they have decided to make their home look and feel like one. They are absolutely on point: why wait for the weekend to escape from the city when you can have a staycation right within your own home? True enough, tropical elements were infused in all aspects, and materials were sourced locally to keep in line with the design theme. It is a rich convolution of wood, quartz, mother of pearl, shells, abaca, and reeds. The house takes its cue from the colors of nature—yellow, blue, and green hues play up the predominantly neutral base colors that are rich in textures. Furniture pieces were carefully chosen and mostly custom-made to fit such an abundant space. More than pleasing to the eye, the furniture pieces are comfortable enough for lounging.

The second level is as engaging as the ground floor for it leads to their private quarters, as well as a mini library, an entertainment area, and even an indoor laundry area. This is an interesting design solution that the couple has welcomed in order to accommodate the pool that they have entailed from the start.

From the beginning, building their home is a testament to their dedication, distinct taste, and utmost trust to design professionals. Furthermore, the husband has been committed to carrying them out to the last detail by being closely involved with the project management and even sourcing for interesting finds. Contrary to what most may know or feel, he has enjoyed doing such simply because he can see their dream home unfold right before his eyes: one that is irresistibly inviting, a getaway that you wouldn’t want to get away from. 🏡

This functional open-plan kitchen by Scavolini provides a stark contrast to the mother-of-pearl backsplash and rich, luxurious quartz countertop. Premium appliances from Elba provide convenience and joy in preparing sumptuous meals whether for the family or for guests. Large windows and sliding doors are crucial for allowing the view of the pool and letting fresh, cool air in.







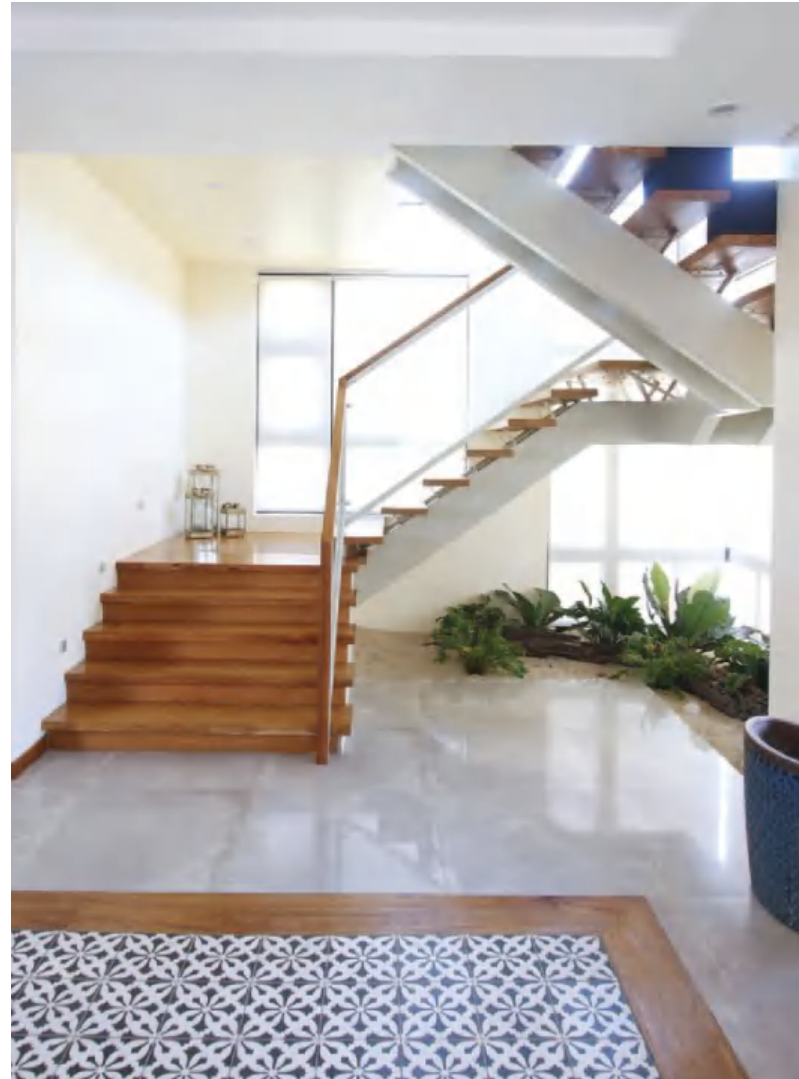
Top left: Similar to most hotel suites, the designers have provided a petite writing desk and a woven chair in the bedroom. **Bottom Left:** Shallow shelves display nautical and tropical elements to add to the beach resort feel of the room. **Right:** The anteroom is where the family often spends time watching TV with the kids, especially on slow weekends. Furniture pieces are kept modular and comfy, so they are easy to move around. A neutral palette infused with cool hues has a breezy calming effect.

“When we come home, we want to feel as if we’re on a weekend getaway”



Left: In line with their desire to have a resort-like feel for the entire home, the couple decided to take it a notch higher by creating a hideaway within a hideaway with this mini master bedroom that has direct access to the pool. The tranquil blue walls are courtesy of the *abaca* wallpaper used throughout one wall from the anteroom to the bedroom. Meanwhile, *abaca* wallpaper in its natural color envelopes the sloped ceiling to add warmth and textural interest.

Right: The bathroom has dual access from the bedroom and from the pool, a convenient and safe way to avoid any accidents caused by slipping.



One of the most visual and interesting parts of the home is the powder room. Surprisingly, the accent wall is kept neutral, but only because of the textured finish. A bold turquoise wall is used on the upper third of the rest of the walls to emphasize the height. A solid wood ledge runs across one wall to serve as a countertop to the fossilized beauty of a sink and faucet, which is a replica of the hand water pumps or *poso*.



On the upper level is the family area for when they want to watch TV, read, or lounge. Being situated in the corner lot, the natural light streaming in can sometimes be a little too strong especially in the afternoons, so blackout shades are a welcome solution, as well as ceiling fans that help dissipate the heat.

*Building their home
is a testament to
their dedication,
distinct taste, and
utmost trust to design
professionals*



White is a popular choice for quaint rooms to make them look bigger. However, too much white can look too sterile. Here, they decided to use different hues of beige, ivory, taupe, and ecru to retain an airy, non-constricting feel.



A four-poster bed takes its rightful place in the spacious master suite. *Faux* abaca wall coverings in vinyl, as well as solid *narra* planks for the flooring, are huge elements to add warmth. Wall lamps with woven lattice detail illuminate the room with a tropical glow.



The mini library is one of the couple's kids' favorite spaces to stay in. A subtly vibrant color scheme of yellows and grays gives the room a dynamic feel. "The yellow ceiling and diagonal stripes on the walls remind me of sunshine, and also serves the purpose of keeping the family members awake and alert while studying or working. Yellow is also known to improve memory," shares designer Erika Narciso.



Originally meant to be the dining area, the designer deemed it fit to be a patio instead. Now this quaint space is a beautiful transformation, perfect for enjoying morning coffees or afternoon snacks right by the pool area while listening to the fountain. The vertical slats allow for sufficient air circulation, as well as privacy from the utility area.

HOMES

The front door opens up to the living room of the house, in which every space makes family members and guests feel instantly at home.





The dining table especially handcrafted from raw wood was gifted to the couple by a pastor.

MASTERPIECE

Get lost in the art inside this haven

*Written by Kyrah Cheng | Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100
Art directed by Camille del Rosario*



The combined living and dining area is the couple's favorite part of the house, thus the abundance of much-loved artworks on the plain white walls.





The floor-to-ceiling windows by the stairs make the home seem more expansive.

Strikingly white accented with natural textures like brick and wood, this home is a vision. Its ambiance, along with the abundance of lush bonsai, transports you far away from the busy city, making you feel like you've been thrown into a serene and undiscovered Japanese spa. It may also be likened to a museum—with its shiny marble floors, minimalist furniture, and impressive display of artworks—that has become homey through pops of color and floor-to-ceiling windows all around the house.

Interior designer Jennie De Dios shares that during the brainstorming process, the couple only had a few requests: something that is modern, timeless, and has enough space for their art collection. The man of the house is a major art aficionado and, through the years, he has grown a precious collection featuring works of national artists such as Vicente Manansala and Federico Aguilar Alcuaz, as well as other Filipino masters like Juvenal Sansó, Mauro Malang Santos, Ed Castrillo, Michael Cacnio, and Ramon Orlina.

The owners, who are relaxed and easygoing by nature, enjoy entertaining a lot. Their dwelling was designed to reflect this, which is why no formal area is needed to make guests feel welcome and instantly at home. The two-storey home boasts of three elegantly designed bedrooms on the top floor, two identical



The kitchen is the husband's territory—this is where all the magic happens every time he's in the mood to entertain.



The contemporary bathroom overlooks a Zen garden.



guestrooms meant for each mother-in-law, two home offices with contrasting masculine and feminine motifs, a game room awaiting its billiard table, and a high-end entertainment room. The entire ground floor overlooks the stunning sight of the pool and miniature garden designed by architect Lawrence Reyes through a glass window.

But what really makes this house special is that it exudes character, and a lot of the pieces have a story waiting to be told. For instance, there's furniture imported from Italy; a hand-me-down vintage couch from the wife's grandfather; a dining table especially crafted from raw wood, which was gifted to the couple by a pastor; and a

wall of magnetic souvenirs narrating the owners' travels and adventures together.

True art lovers, the couple created their very own masterpiece that they can see and enjoy every day—their home. It took two years to perfect the house to the last detail, but it is well worth the wait and is a testament of how all good things take time. 🏠





The family room is classic and timeless, with its L-shaped couch, leather accent chair, and glass top coffee table.

HOMES

The couple's daughter was very hands-on with turning her dream room into a reality. She chose most of the furniture pieces herself and had the sea as her inspiration.



What really makes this house special is that it exudes character, and a lot of the pieces have a story waiting to be told



With contrasting feminine and masculine motifs, the home offices are the only part of the house that the couple didn't have a unanimous vision for.

UNTAMED

Breaking the monotony in a modern space

*Written by Marie Angelie Francisco
Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100
Art directed by Geraldine Verga*

Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, two of Hollywood's most iconic personalities, would probably best personify this unconventional modern tropical residence in Makati. This project by designer Lorenzo Valencia breaks the boundaries of modern design by mixing function, flexibility, and eclecticism in the most sophisticated way. While it took four years to complete, the final product proved to be worth all the trouble.

The construction of the three-storey dwelling was a long and fruitful endeavor that started in 2011 under the expertise of Architect Ed Calma. The homeowners simply wanted a house that could grow with them through the years and, being a small and young family, it had to be flexible enough to accommodate the requirements of a growing lot. This was achieved by carefully allocating enough floor area per room and creating unobstructed views from every corner of the house. Family members can easily interchange one space from the other without disrupting the flow and function of their home.

There is harmony in chaos, and it takes a skilled eye to curate all the commotion into a unified theme. What makes the house such a warm and intimate space is that there was a strong collaboration between the designer and the owners in every detail of the process.



Wanderlust is the name of the game with several unique and antiqued pieces adorning this living area in a stark modern design. A play of golds and blacks, as well as wood finishes, creates a deep and bold statement in the space.



Simple grandeur is translated using tailored studded pieces against a reclaimed wood dining table, not to mention a giant glass chandelier that breaks the high ceiling height.



The homeowners simply wanted a house that could grow with them through the years



Left: A grand piano coupled with a silver console and brass droplight mixes classic and contemporary styles. **Right:** The staircase makes use of tempered glass in lieu of traditional balusters as support. This creates a lighter design that does not need much adornment.

The living room boasts of style coupled with wanderlust, as Lorenzo incorporated the wife's mementos during her numerous travels, and married it with her love for bold and contrasting colors. No space is ever without a unique touch. Anywhere your eyes turn, you are bound to savor a few delectable pieces along the way. Porcelain, brass, and bone accessories adorn the polished and antique table tops, while a sleek and bold area rug pulls everything together into one dynamic and dramatic space.

If there is one thing pop culture has taught us, it is that the walk-in closet is a pivotal part of any woman's fantasies. And to have it be done so remarkably well marks the triumph of a dream come true.

There is something to be said about a haven to call your own, and Lorenzo wanted to make all the owner's wishes come to full view with the open design of the space. Her beautiful personality and personal flair are highlighted by showing off her favorite items and garments in the layout.

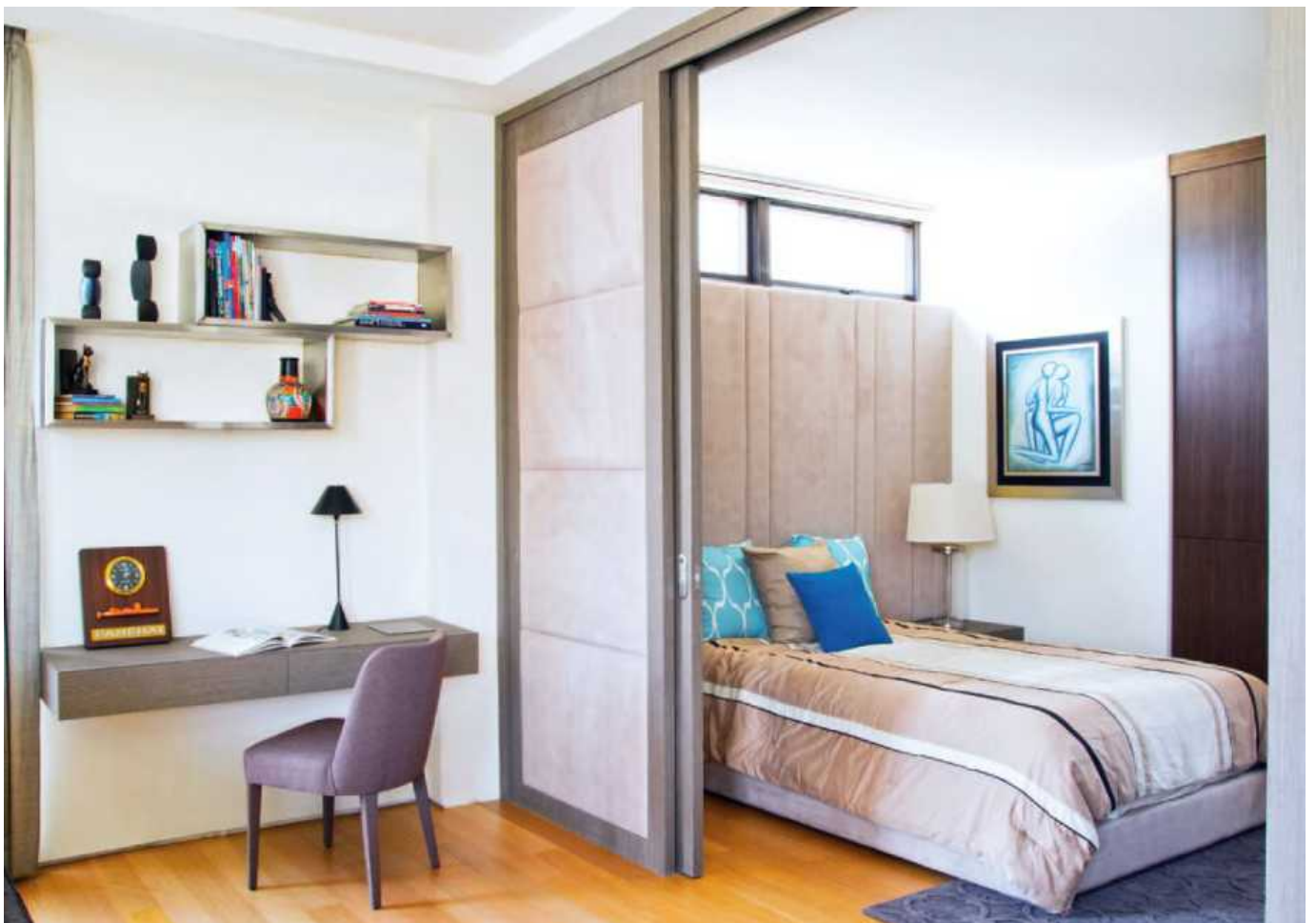
The mention of Brad and Angelina instantly connotes their being a power couple, a merging of two unique and strong individuals. This house definitely deserves to be compared to the two style icons, as the house's design is a beautiful marriage not only of the bold and the daring, but also of the intimate and the serene. 🏠



Carefully tucked in appliances and glass-covered cabinet doors make up this contemporary modern kitchen. The clear-cut vertical lines are a recurring theme throughout the space.

What makes the house such a warm and intimate space is that there was a strong collaboration between the designer and the owners

Right: The deep gray sectional sofa is softened by a *faux* fur throw casually thrown at the edge. **Below:** Separate work from relaxation by adding a divider—in this case, a suede-covered sliding door. The same upholstery is integrated into the other parts of the room, making it a unified theme throughout the design.







Left: The soft pink canopy is a perfect fit to the princess of the household. The playfully sweet but tailored look of the bedroom is further enhanced by the streamlined bedside overhangs, oversized stuffed animal, and intricate wall stencil. **Right:** Boys like to keep themselves calm and collected, and the cool blues and vertical lines do just that. This no frills, no fuss bedroom is anchored by a suede box bed frame and a deep blue area rug.





Bring life and character to a monochromatic room by playing around with different textures, shapes, and sizes. The dark gray headboard is a good contrast to the light gray colors throughout the room, which helps make the bed really stand out. The tufted daybed and its fringed throw add just the right amount of casual glam.



Top left: There is nothing like a bold zebra print chair to add drama and personality to any space. **Above:** The easiest way to add texture and depth to a seemingly streamlined space is by introducing an oversized ornate mirror. **Right:** The walk-in closet merges opulence, grandeur, and contemporary style by mixing sleek glass cabinet doors and intricate statement pieces.



SOUTHERN LIVING

A young couple's safe haven in the south of Manila brings back memories of a carefree childhood

Written and art directed by Cy Yambao | Photographed by Mark Jacob of Studio 100





For the longest time, living in the south has meant waking up to a more laidback lifestyle—of enjoying a relaxed ambiance away from the usual hustle and bustle. But while it brings you to a sanctuary with fresher air and lesser infrastructures, a southern address is almost always stereotyped as being too far away. A young couple, however, wasn't quite ready to let go of the chill environment they've grown accustomed to that they decided to settle down in a subdivision that reminds them of comfort zones.

"We've both been exposed to a laidback lifestyle, having grown up in the south of Manila and in Cebu, respectively, and that's exactly what we wanted for our family," says the man of the house. "We wanted our kids to experience what we've enjoyed before such as being able to play outside and coming home to a house where they can likewise play around freely."

From a cramped condo unit, the couple thought that transferring to a two-storey residence was the much-needed change for their growing family. They had asked for the help of the husband's architect sister,

For this young couple, starting a family meant transferring to a bigger home that would provide a more comfortable haven for them and their children.

"When we were still living in a condo, the kids would run from one room, go outside, and that's it," explains the man of the house. Their present two-storey dwelling employs a free-flowing layout that, aside from giving the couple's two boys enough space to play, also makes each area feel more airy and expansive.



The living area is bathed in neutral tones, with occasional pops of color that give off an equally relaxing ambience. The couple, who both grew up with a laidback lifestyle, wanted their home to be easy on the eyes and not too overwhelming.

Interior designer Rock Robins recommended a glass top dining table that would highlight the design of the wooden base, which he then paired with upholstered chairs in varying styles.

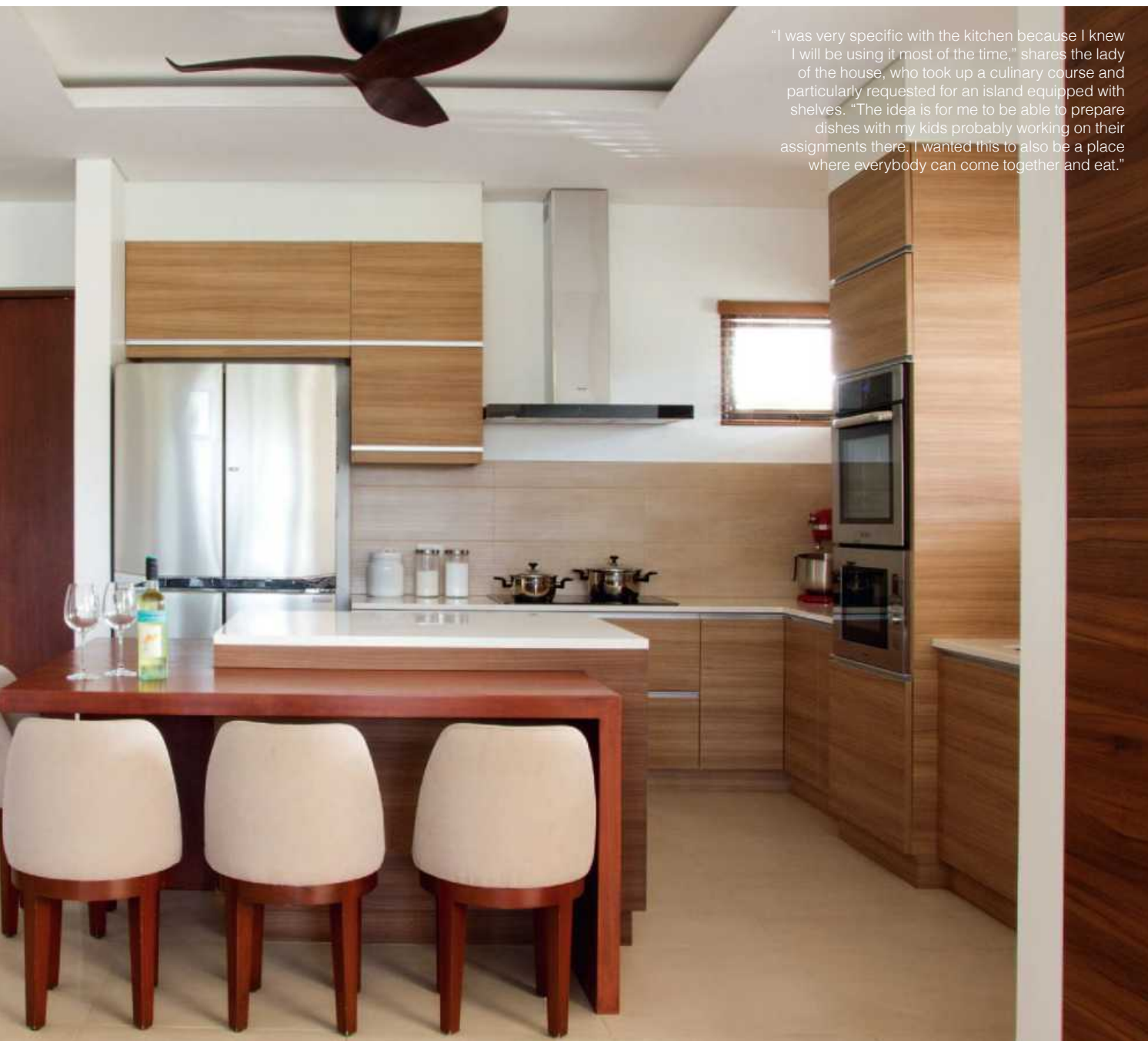




The area underneath the staircase was converted into a powder room, which follows the same neutral palette as the entire house. On the farthest corner is a glass console that Rock topped with accents, a last-minute decision after the space has been extended and made less claustrophobic.



“We didn’t realize the importance of collaborating with an interior designer until we saw the finished product”



"I was very specific with the kitchen because I knew I will be using it most of the time," shares the lady of the house, who took up a culinary course and particularly requested for an island equipped with shelves. "The idea is for me to be able to prepare dishes with my kids probably working on their assignments there. I wanted this to also be a place where everybody can come together and eat."

as well as his childhood friend and interior designer Rock Robins, in building their first family house that would always remind them of home. Employing an open-plan layout inspired by American dwellings, the newly turned over abode is bathed in a neutral palette, complemented by pops of refreshing colors here and there. Custom-made furniture pieces, as well as ample storage space in rooms and even in bare walls,

have been carefully designed to suit the couple's needs and maintain a sense of order in the house despite having two small boys.

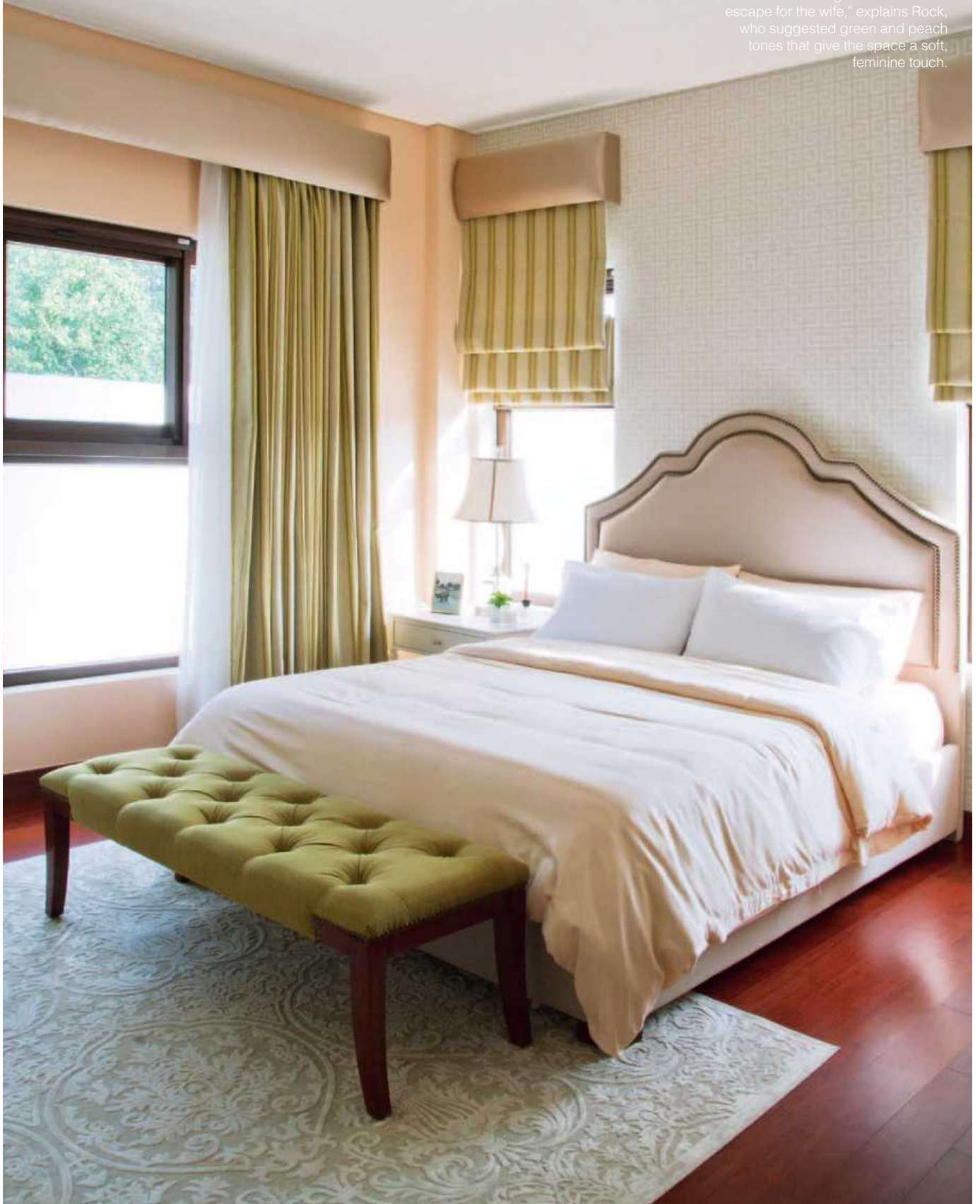
Although the husband and wife made it a point to personally scan through magazines and look for inspirations online, they admitted to getting confused at one point and finding the need to consult with Rock. "We didn't realize the importance of collaborating with

an interior designer until we saw the finished product. Every little detail has been thought of, which saved us the hassle of deciding on what goes well with what," explains the lady of the house. Her husband adds, "Know what your priority is because you're going to live in that house. The good thing is you can add as you go along—prioritize what's more important to you and the rest will follow." 🏠

"I noticed that in some houses," shares the husband, "people just stay inside their rooms. I didn't want that for our family, so we built an entertainment room where we hang out every night before heading to our rooms to sleep." This area doubles as a guestroom, with the L-shaped couch convertible into a queen size bed.



Contrary to most homes with a man cave, this young family decided to transform one of their rooms into a woman sanctuary. "This is actually intended as the girls' room, but for now it serves as a guestroom and an escape for the wife," explains Rock, who suggested green and peach tones that give the space a soft, feminine touch.



HOMES

The mom of two requested that the boys' room be a transition room so that when her children grow up, there won't be any need for drastic changes. The blue-and-green color palette is complemented by striped wallpaper, printed duvet covers, and a patterned rug that can all be easily replaced should the young boys get tired of them.





Left: Aside from ample storage space, another requirement for the boys' room was a study area. While the toddlers don't have much use of the desk at this moment, it will prove to be a worthy investment when they grow older.

Right: Keeping with the theme of the room, the boys' bathroom is covered in blue wall and floor tiles. The couple originally wanted to have separate sinks, but realized that an additional storage cabinet is actually more functional in the meantime.



“The good thing is you can add as you go along—prioritize what’s more important to you and the rest will follow”

"If it were up to me, I'd choose more vibrant colors, but of course you and your husband have to agree on something," the wife shares. Rock opted for neutral and feminine colors, balancing them out with patterns and hints of blue to likewise add visual interest.





The wife's only requirement for the master bath was for it to have two separate sinks. "I've read several times that this will really save your marriage," she says with a laugh. She patterned the glass wall shelves from those in hotels, so as to make everything handy and easily accessible.



It's a Wrap

Smart ways of storing Christmas decorations

Written by Razel Estrella | Photographed by Ed Simon of Studio 100 and Greg Mayo

The buildup towards the holidays is arguably more exciting than the holiday itself. Everyone gathers in order to come up with creative decorating ideas and bring out the spirit of Christmas. And then, in what seems like an instant, it's over.

While the cheers, warmth, and smell of festive food linger, one feels a little sad about going back to the daily grind. Worse, there are all these furnishings, lights, and trinkets that need to be tucked away. It's such a chore that sometimes, a household keeps its Christmas tree up until summer—not because they can't let go of the fond Yuletide memories, but because they have no clue on how or where to store these.

If that scenario sounds familiar, here are a few tricks you might find useful.

Rules of Thumb

1. Keep the original packaging.

Ideally, when you buy decorations, they are packed for safety and longevity. As such, don't throw away the containers that keep the décor intact for later use.

2. Separate items. Throwing Christmas balls and canes in one box is the quickest way to damage these ornaments. They will scratch each other, and the colors or paint may rub off or peel.

3. Label. Storage is not about hiding objects from plain sight; it's about making it easy for you to find them again when needed. Label every box and case to know which one goes where.

Storage Ideas

1. Artificial tree storage – Usually a duffel bag with heavy-duty zipper and handles

DIY: A big cardboard box from an old appliance may come to mind, but a better alternative is a plastic container to protect the tree from insects and moisture.

2. Christmas lights winder – We all know that electric cords should not be tangled. There are winders where you can roll the lights and unspool them just as easily.

DIY: A big can, as in a used milk can, may also work as a spool. Store the light bulbs inside the can, but wrap each bulb in bubble wrap for protection.

3. Ornament storage box – This is where all the trinkets go. It's best to pick clear plastic boxes, so you can always check on the ornaments' condition. Look for stackable ones with adjustable dividers.

DIY: Shoe boxes, wine boxes, and egg cartons are all perfect storage alternatives as their varying shapes can accommodate different types of décor. More importantly, they have lids.

4. Wreath bag – As with the artificial tree bag, there are also wreath bags available in the market. These containers are designed to keep the shape of the wreath. They come in different sizes, and you may also use them as storage for your *parol*. If it has bulbs, again, take them off and place in a different storage.

DIY: A plastic container is one option. Another option is a garment bag, which sometimes come with the suits you buy, so don't put them in the trash. You can also store other bigger and irregularly shaped décor here.

5. Gift wrapper caddy – It's often difficult to figure out where to stow the remaining gift wrappers and ribbons you have. A gift wrapper caddy can help you keep things organized. Some of which have a ribbon dispenser and other compartments for all your gift-wrapping materials.

DIY: An old hamper or bin can do the trick. But our favorite is the hanging organizer with differently sized pockets. It can hold anything, from wrapping paper to ribbons to bows.



An Easy Feast

Chef Sabrina Artadi works her magic on three holiday recipes anchored on McCormick seasonings

Written by Cy Yambao

Photographed by Yukie Sarto of Studio 100



"The rule is to simplify without compromising great food," says television chef Sabrina Artadi, who prefers a relaxed vibe when entertaining guests. "I set up wine and beer in large coolers, so everyone can help themselves. I also have simple tapas, and main dishes served in pots and pans straight off the stove."



HAINANESE CHICKEN CALDO

Throw in two cups of uncooked rice, a cup of leeks, a fourth cup of sesame oil, and some garlic to your trusted rice cooker. Mix them altogether with a pack of McCormick's Hainanese Chicken Rice Recipe Mix. Add raw chicken, half a teaspoon of salt, and a couple of dashes of ground ginger. Cover and let it cook. Serve with hardboiled eggs and mango salsa on the side, as well as sweet ginger water and spicy soy tomato sesame dips.

"I have always been interested in cooking, but it became a passion after having travelled to Middle Eastern and Mediterranean countries," says television chef Sabrina Artadi, who concocts healthy dishes as graciously as she walks the ramp. The former beauty queen's journey to being a domestic goddess involved overcoming challenges and focusing all her energy on the two most important people in her life. "I got myself into a lot of trouble—plus I had to raise my children as a single mom—so I saw cooking as a stress reliever.

It helped me bond instantly with my kids and their friends, too."

Sabrina's free-spirited character extends to gatherings with family and friends, where she encourages guests to just sit back and relax. "The success of a great party depends on how chill the host is," she says. But while she makes use of readily available ingredients and banks on affordable, easy-to-cook recipes, Sabrina ensures that the nutrition value of each dish is never compromised. "I don't slave in the kitchen," she adds. "Cooking for the lazy can be fabulous." 🏠



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FIESTA BIRYANI RICE AND NOODLE PABELLA

Start with two cups of rice seasoned with half a pack of McCormick's Biryani Rice Recipe Mix. Prepare two cups of pasta as well, which will make the dish look and taste more festive. Have a pack of raisins, onions, garlic, and olive oil ready. Mix everything together so that all flavors come out, and then pour about three cups of non-sweetened tomato sauce. Add chopped chorizo, and grilled chicken dressed in a fourth cup of vodka, a fourth cup of tomato sauce, and McCormick's Lemon Pepper Seasoning. Top your paella with parsley, cashew nuts, and hardboiled eggs, then let it cook for about 15 minutes to achieve just the right level of burnt rice underneath.

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YOGURT VANILLA ICE CREAM

Melt butter in a pan, and then pour a cap full of each of McCormick's Pure Lemon Extract and Pure Almond Extract. Also add a cap of rum before throwing in some fresh fruits like pineapples, orange rinds, or ripe mangoes. While that's cooking, grab a ramekin (or wine glasses for a fancier setting) and fill it with layers of vanilla ice cream. Drizzle yogurt over it, and then top it off with rum butter and fresh fruits.



Season's Best

Each year, we can't help but feel the pressure of offering up an even better holiday experience for our loved ones. More and more, it becomes challenging to come up with an even more unique set of gift ideas or one-of-a-kind holiday theme for the home.



THIS SEASON, WHY NOT SHAKE UP YOUR HOLIDAY GAME BY CHECKING OUT THE WORLD BAZAAR FESTIVAL FOR A ONE-STOP SHOPPING EXPERIENCE.

Renowned as the country's longest running charity bazaar, it boasts of a superlative range of the season's best gift choice as well as home improvement products such as home decors, essentials, furniture, and even state-of-the-art appliances! Plus, there's the much-awaited Christmas Village, which carries the biggest range of holiday décor will provide you with all that you'll need to make this year's holiday décor your best ever yet. From unique and rare shopping finds to top-of-the-line home design products and essentials, don't miss the World Bazaar Festival which will open its doors to the public on December 4 to December 21, 2015, 12nn to 10pm from Monday to Thursday and 10am to 12mn from Friday to Sunday.



Habitat Manila

From Europe to Asia, this newest haven for modern furnishings lets you celebrate the art of living

Written by **Geraldine Verga** | Photographed by **Mark Jacob of Studio 100**

Manila is once again paving the way for another furniture and homeware brand, this time from a Paris-based firm called Habitat Design International. Appealing to the young, urban market, Habitat Manila offers a wide array of furnishings that are of good quality, carry tasteful designs, and wouldn't burn a hole in your pocket. It veers away from kitschy pieces, and instead produces practical yet well-designed products for every area in the home. Habitat Manila particularly takes pride in its kitchenware, as it has collaborated with influential French chef Thierry Marx of the molecular gastronomy fame.

Habitat Manila's furniture pieces employ clean, straight lines in a variety of finishes. Since moving its production back to Europe, clients are assured of affordable quality pieces that bring style and function together. No room in your dwelling will definitely be left unfurnished—from the living and dining areas to bedrooms and home offices to bathrooms and kitchens. Indeed, Habitat Manila is committed to founder Sir Terence Conran's philosophy that the "useful can be beautiful, and beautiful can be affordable." 🏠



Build a beautiful library without breaking the bank with the *Camus* bookcase with ladder, coupled with the *Brandie* tufted three-seater leather sofa to achieve the perfect combination for a gentleman's lair.



Robin day
chair in
cream leather
and walnut,
P21,990



Callahan
chair in oak,
P11,800

Habitat has redefined the value of relaxed living by embracing its founder Terence Conran's ideology that "a home should have a spirit, but most certainly a heart."

Kura origami lampshade,
P4,950



Ceramic suspension lamp, P4,800

Regency cushion in petrol blue,
P2,295

Finko embroidered cushion in indigo, P1,895



Elvis twin candle holder,
P1,495



Elisabeth pyramid lantern, P4,495



Parasol table lamp in copper and white, P6,900



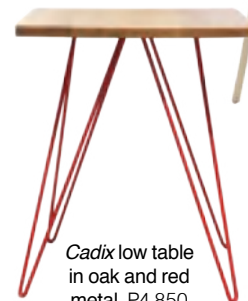
Cypraea dinner plate, P1,950;
desert plate, P1,450; and
small quilted bowl, P1,650



Drum linen lamp shade,
P5,500



Feliz aqua blue vase, P1,295 and *Fauve aqua blue vase,* P3,295



Cadix low table in oak and red metal, P4,850

Tripod II floor lamp base in ash,
P13,800



Naoko armchair in blue, P32,500



Drake 3-seater sofa in light grey,
P68,500

SPOTLIGHT | RESTAURANT

Renowned architect Carlo Calma, who is also one of Vask's co-owners, was the creative mind behind the interiors of this fine-dining restaurant that doubles as a gallery of culture and art. "He created an ambiance that crosses from the traditional to the modern Basque Vibe, of course with his own touch," says Chef Chele Gonzalez.



Vask takes pride in serving only authentic food like Pintxos (P95), which are famous small snacks from Northern Spain. From top: Sous Vide Tuna with tomato marmalade and garlic chili pepper, jamon with parmesan cheese, roast beef with cheese emulsion and bell pepper, Gambas Aioli, and Bacalao Ajoarriero

Vask

The closest you can get to an authentic Basque Country dining experience

Written by **Andrea Arines** | Photographed by **Floyd Jhocson of Studio 100**

“We wanted to give our customers an authentic Basque Country experience,” says Chef Chele Gonzalez on what inspired him and his partners to introduce Basque cuisine to the local market. “There were a lot of generic tapas bars before, but most of them focus on Catalan food. Basque food has never really been an ideal concept here in Manila.”

Located in the heart of Bonifacio Global City, Vask is comprised of three sections: the tapas bar and dining area, the outdoor lounge, and the degustation art gallery. Architect Carlo Calma, also one of the restaurant's co-owners, managed to visually connect all three areas by employing a unified theme of wood elements, statement fixtures, and an artwork collection. Their menu is one that likewise speaks of culture—traditional Spanish dishes have been infused with native ingredients that add to the appetizing flavor and present Vask as an innovative restaurant.

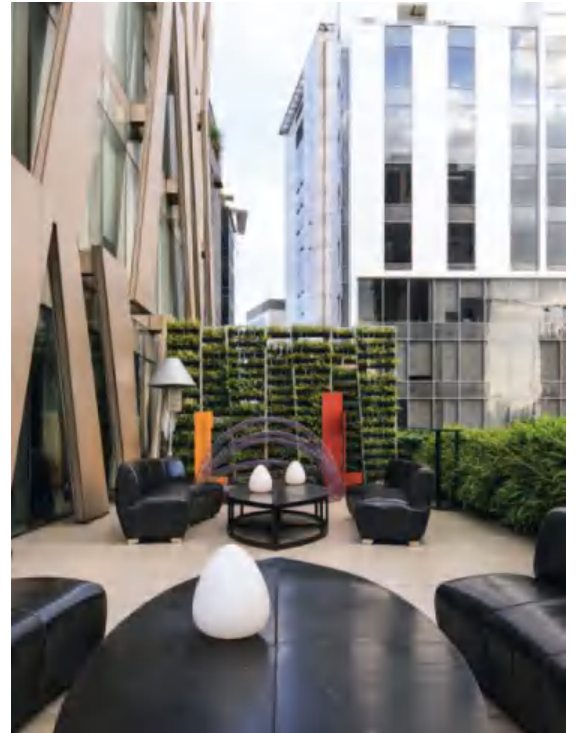
“Where I'm from, social nights would be spent hopping from one tapas bar to the other because each tapas bar had only one or two specialties, with a glass of wine each. It's a culture that we live by in Spain,” recounts Chef Chele. “Our menu at Vask is definitely authentic, but what makes us unique is the combination of both modern and traditional.” 🍷



Architect Carlo Calma has a penchant for art, so he decided to turn Vask into a gallery for his precious collections. Fill your stomachs (and eyes) as you dine in the function room lined with paintings, photographs, and sculptures.



Vask claims to provide the next level of comfort food, which ingeniously combines traditional and modern styles. Among the bestsellers in their menu are the Scallops and Black Ink Risotto (P650) and Foie Gras on Mango Toast (P695).



Spend a night at Vask's outdoor dining area, where you can enjoy the view of city lights while drinking with a group of friends.



Vask's interiors were designed artistically, which is why even the lighting fixtures like these bulbs hanging from upside down umbrellas can be considered works of art.



Aruga by Rockwell

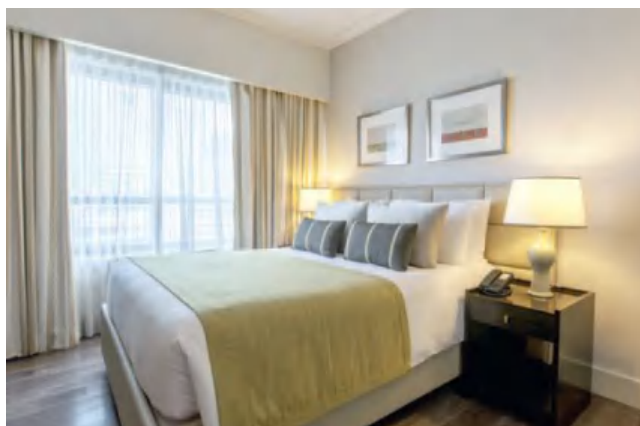
World-class amenities fused with congenial Filipino hospitality

*Written by Geraldine Verga and Cy Yambao
Photographed by Ed Simon of Studio 100
Additional photo courtesy of Aruga by Rockwell*

Rockwell Land once again sets the bar high in exclusive and extraordinary living with its first venture in hotel and leisure services. Derived from the Filipino word “aruga,” which means to nurture, expect only the best service that the Filipinos are known for: warm, intuitive, and caring.

Whether you’re here for a business trip or simply longing for a change in scenery, Aruga by Rockwell is dedicated to hosting its guests with unparalleled services and impeccable amenities with luxury and convenience in mind. Prepare for a stress-free stay, as the

serviced apartments provide an e-lounge and meeting rooms; a fully-equipped fitness gym; a pool for wellness; 24-hour concierge, reception, and security; grocery delivery service; and even babysitting services. Aruga by Rockwell also offers accessibility to some of the most tasteful restaurants that cater to a global palate, as well as an impressive lineup of retail brands that are only a few steps away. Being a purveyor of elevated lifestyle, Aruga by Rockwell extends hospitality to exceptional care that equates to looking after guests’ primary needs and absolute comfort. 🏠



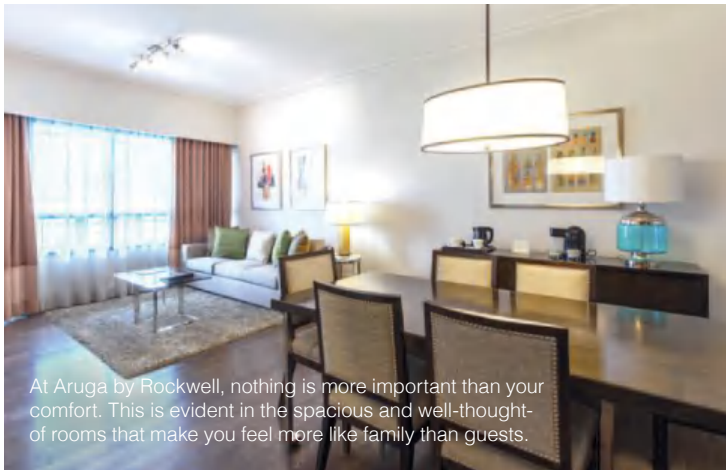
Aruga by Rockwell has 114 rooms that range from studio units, and one- and two-bedroom suites that boast of contemporary Asian design in premium finishes. Like a home away from home, they come fully-equipped with a kitchen and in-room laundry. The heavenly bedrooms are the most inviting reward after a long day, while the compact but comfortable living area is a great place to bond over movies and drinks.



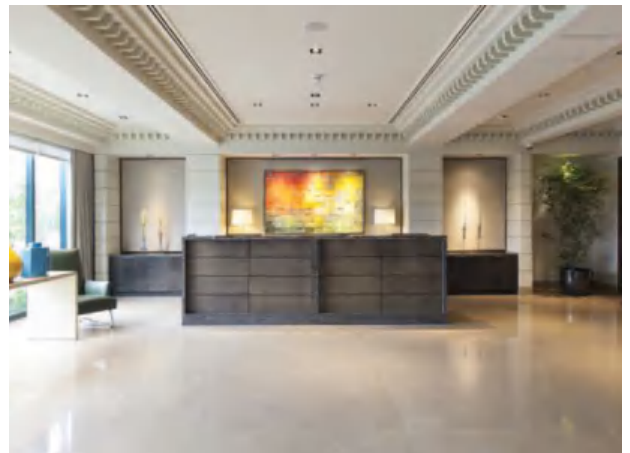
Left: The Oriental Salad with sesame dressing (P395) is a healthy choice, as it combines fresh vegetables with a nest of fried Vermicelli, chicken fillets, and fried siomai dumplings. **Right:** Reminiscent of home-cooked meals, the Gambo Verde (P515) is spaghetti pasta enveloped in a blend of cream of pesto sauce. It is topped with prawns and roasted pine nuts.



Aruga by Rockwell has an in-house coffee shop, Aruga Cafe, whose interiors suggest a refreshing ambiance with the green color palette and walls lined with framed artworks.



At Aruga by Rockwell, nothing is more important than your comfort. This is evident in the spacious and well-thought-of rooms that make you feel more like family than guests.



Directly translating to nurture, Aruga by Rockwell lives up to its name, which exemplifies the Filipino brand of hospitality.



Surrounding you with everything you need, Aruga by Rockwell provides amenities for your health and well-being such as a swimming pool and a fitness gym.

Spirit of Christmas

How to attract positive luck during the most wonderful time of the year

Written by Patti Sunio
Photographed by Greg Mayo

Family. That's what Christmas is all about for Filipinos. "We like to decorate our homes to get into the holiday spirit and, at the same time, we make an effort because we anticipate our relatives coming over to visit," says celebrity *feng shui* expert Master Hanz Cua. "It brings us joy when we're able to let them inside our happy homes."

With a little help from *feng shui*, a carefully decorated home for the holidays helps ensure harmony among family members, attracts positive luck, and welcomes a prosperous new year. Master Hanz focuses on the most common décor found in practically every Filipino's home: the Christmas tree.

"Where you place it is indicative of the aspect of life you'd want to enhance," he says. Set up your Christmas tree in the north sector of the home for career luck or in the southwest to promote harmonious relationships between family members. The tree placed in the east may bring in good fortune, while that in the northwest may cause an increase in wealth. The basic *feng shui* rules still apply, so do not put your tree under the stairs or a beam, as this will suppress luck. It shouldn't be placed in front of the bathroom either, for this represents luck being flushed out easily.

When it comes to tree ornaments, as with all things *feng shui*, balance is key. "Create a balanced energy using the five elements," recommends Master Hanz. Green and brown colors represent wood, which takes

care of the health aspect. Red, yellow, orange, and pink are representative of fire, which is for promotion, fame, and recognition in your career. The use of crystals and earth-toned décor may bring in prosperity, while gray, white, and silver colors attract abundance. Blue, black, and purple décor signify water for money luck.

The more, the merrier. "Indeed, Christmastime is the perfect moment to go all out and deck your home to your heart's content," says Master Hanz. "A new tree means new energy and new opportunities for the family. The bigger and taller, the better, as this means greater abundance and prosperity."

Home décor aside, there are two other important elements that make a Filipino Christmas—food and gifts. "Have fish, chicken, and pork for abundance and wealth; oranges and pineapples for money; apples for good harmony; and pasta or noodles for long life," advises Master Hanz. "As for gifts, prepare *ang pao* containing denominations of 168 because this symbolizes the road to prosperity in *feng shui*."

Last but not the least, "The family should be happy," says Master Hanz. "More than the décor, the food, and the gifts, it's the family's bond and togetherness that matter. Choose to greet the season and receive the blessings with a happy heart." 🏠





Rat

Focus on work but keep a low profile to avoid conflict with colleagues, who may be jealous of your achievements. Avoid gossip and office politics at all costs. Mind your own business—don't make others' business yours.

Lucky home décor: Monkey king

Holiday gift: Evil eye amulet



Ox

Low drive and low strength are perceived for the Oxen this month. You may be experiencing a weak point, as your hard work barely gets recognition. Use the situation to learn how to de-stress and keep yourself motivated.

Lucky home décor: Pi Yao or money catcher

Holiday gift: Citrine crystal stone



Tiger

Tigers are lucky this month and can expect a steady flow of wealth. Help will immediately come your way when a problem arises. Be careful with your choice of words, as these may be unintentionally offensive to others.

Lucky home décor: Money bar or prosperity pig

Holiday gift: Tiger eye



Rabbit

Rabbits will get recognition at work and be rewarded for a job well done. This month will be good in terms of career advancement. Just remember to focus on your goals and give your 100 percent dedication. Learn to also socialize with your colleagues and boss.

Lucky home décor: Fortune cat

Holiday gift: Fortune dog



Dragon

Breathe a sigh of relief this month, as it'll be a lucky one for Dragons. Everything will go according to plan. You'll also gain popularity and recognition for your work.

Lucky home décor: Dragon with fireball

Holiday gift: Auspicious dragon pendant



Snake

Snakes may have an unfortunate month, so better be prepared. You may find yourself too preoccupied with work duties and, despite your efforts, there will hardly be any recognition. Continue to focus on your work and learn to be patient.

Lucky home décor: Monkey king coin

Holiday gift: Money coin



Horse

There will be smooth career luck for horses this month. Help will appear when needed. Take this opportunity to make the most of your experiences at work. Remember to thank the people you'll work closely with.

Lucky home décor: Wind horse

Holiday gift: Eight running horses



Sheep

Luck will improve for Sheep this month. Single Sheep will have strong love luck, so it's a good time to go out and meet new people. It will be likely that you'll meet your soulmate. But since safety is at risk this month, remember to wear a seatbelt and always be cautious while driving.

Lucky home décor: Fortune horse

Holiday gift: Rhino elephant



Monkey

Monkeys may be prone to illnesses this month. It's advised that you get enough sleep and rest, and have a balanced diet. Schedules may become hectic at work, which may lead to poor health and later on, poor work output.

Lucky home décor: Monkey king

Holiday gift: Wu lou



Rooster

Roosters will be busy with activities at work this month. They may have a very hectic schedule, so it's important to slow down a bit and take time to sort out issues properly. Don't act without thinking, as this may lead to bigger problems.

Lucky home décor: Lucky rooster

Holiday gift: Dragon tortoise



Dog

Wealth luck looks good for Dogs this month. It's time to focus on businesses and possible sideline work. Consider joining a bazaar, as this may significantly increase your income. Get in touch with old contacts for possible business deals.

Lucky home décor: Wealth-inviting cat and prosperity pig

Holiday gift: Raw citrine geode crystal



Boar

This month will be full of surprises for Boars. Expect the unexpected. Have a backup plan for all scenarios. That way, when a problem comes, you can easily overcome it. Before getting into anything, think twice and weigh the consequences first.

Lucky home décor: Prosperity pig

Holiday gift: Wealth ship



Visit **Master Hanz Cua** at his 8 Treasures—House of Mystical Charms shop at 1/F EDSA Shangri-La Plaza, Mandaluyong City or get in touch with him at 0922 8290 382.

Tropical Sophistication

Designer Amina Aranaz-Alunan's favorite home items show that passion for design runs in their blood

Interviewed by Cy Yambao | Photographed by Floyd Jhocson of Studio 100



1. “My grandfather would dabble in furniture-making before, so a lot of my pieces are actually from him. I’ve had this carved **wooden chair** for years, and people would always ask if it was up for sale when I used to display it in my store and during exhibits. Finally this year, I worked with a furniture maker to reproduce it in white wash finish and launch it as Aranaz Casa’s *Antonio* chair.”

2. “My dad makes resin and paper mache home products for export—one of the reasons why my sister Rosanna and I decided to get into home. This **decorative hippo accent**, which is a nice conversation piece that you can display in the house, is his creation.”

3. “The **pineapple trays**, which have become one of our signature designs, are more like trinket trays. These are made of resin, but we’re releasing food-safe versions soon, so homeowners may use them for serving as well.”

4. “These **soaps** under my own line, Philippa, are all Philippine-made using coconut oil. We find that all scents with lavender are our bestselling, but we recently launched the coconut and pineapple mix. Our **almond milk lavender candle**, on the other hand, is made out of beeswax, which assures that burning time is longer.”

5. “We try to create home products that use our embroidery, including this **four-piece placemat set**. In a tropical country like ours, we aim to promote tropical city living, which hearts back to all tropical elements but doesn’t necessarily limit itself to the beach.”

6. “Also by my dad, these **decorative dog sculptures** were named after my sister’s pet dogs, Salty and Chuck. She has a new Schnauzer, so I told her we need to create another one to add to the collection. We actually accept orders in different colors and finishes.”

7. “Our newest design is the **banana leaf print**. I like this entire set because even though the print suggests a resort-like vibe, the blues and whites make each piece a bit more elegant. We also have the **malachite design** inspired by the semi-precious stones we use for our pieces. We like how the print reminds you of luxury while not compromising function.”

8. “This **Peacock chair** from Silla Loca represents my penchant for everything vintage. It marries my love for vintage pieces and my love for natural weaving.”

9. “I love embroidery, and basically anything you can bring to your home that reminds you of a laidback resort feel. I think this **pillow** does just that because of the *anahaw* leaves, which are similar to our Palma print. These are all signature prints specially created for ARANÁZ Tu.”

10. “I love entertaining, so I also enjoy finding nice entertaining



“All sources of inspiration for ARANÁZ Tu really tell a story of a leisurely lifestyle,” says bag designer Amina Aranaz-Alunan, who collaborates with sister Rosanna Aranaz for all brand designs. “What we intend to do with our bags, as well as with our home products, is to bring that sense of leisure to everyday living.”

paraphernalia. I wanted to make our own collection, starting with this **flamingo cocktail spoon** that embodies the resort lifestyle coupled with a fun and quirky feel.” 🏠

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